

In re Patent Application of:
NATHAN SNELL, et al
Serial No. 10/667,817
Filing Date: 9/22/2003

In the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended): An apparatus for automatically opening a swinging door,
the apparatus comprising:

an actuator ~~further comprising having~~ at least one proximity sensor for detecting at least one proximity zone ~~corresponding to individual iconic instructions comprising a display;~~
a display operable with the actuator, the display providing an iconic instruction for an individual to perform an affirmative action so as to cause the at least one proximity sensor to activate the actuator;
a control unit in electronic communication with said the actuator; and
a power assisted drive mechanism in electronic communication with said the control unit, wherein said the power assisted drive mechanism operates to open said the door through the reverse activation of a conventional door closer.
2. (Currently Amended): The automatic door opening apparatus of claim 1,
wherein the at least one proximity detector sensor detects the proximity of an individual.
3. (Currently Amended): The automatic door opening apparatus of claim 1,
wherein the proximity detector display provides iconic instructions to an individual based on the proximity of the individual to said the at least one proximity detector sensor.
4. (Currently Amended): The automatic door opening apparatus of claim 3,
wherein the proximity display provides an audible signal based on the proximity of the individual to the actuator.

Claim 5 (Canceled)

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6. (Currently Amended): The automatic door opening apparatus of claim 5-1,
wherein said the affirmative action comprises waving a hand proximate to the at least
one proximity detector sensor.

7. (Currently Amended): The automatic door opening apparatus of claim 1,
wherein the at least one proximity detector sensor is of at a sufficient distance from said
an inwardly swinging door to prevent the individual from impeding the an opening of the
inwardly swinging door.

8. (Currently Amended): A method of automatically opening ~~an inward a swinging~~
~~restroom door, the method comprising:~~ comprising ~~the utilization of:~~

~~operating an actuator further comprising having a proximity sensor and a display,~~
~~having a plurality of proximity zones corresponding to individual iconic instructions~~
~~comprising a display; a control unit in electronic communication with said the actuator,~~
~~and a power assisted drive mechanism in electronic communication with said the~~
~~control unit, wherein said power assisted drive mechanism operates to automatically~~
~~open said a door through the reverse activation of a conventional door closer whereby~~
~~the swinging restroom door is opened automatically;~~

providing an iconic instruction for an individual to perform an affirmative action so
as to cause the door to automatically open, wherein the affirmative action includes
waving a hand proximate the sensor; and

automatically opening the door using the power assisted drive mechanism
responsive to the affirmative action.

9. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 8, comprising the detecting of an
individual by wherein the proximity sensor detects the proximity of an individual.

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10. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 8, further providing wherein the proximity sensor display provides an audible signal based on the proximity of the individual to the actuator.

11. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 10, wherein said actuator provides further providing an iconic instruction for an individual not to touch the proximity detector.

Claims 12 and 13 (Cancelled)

14. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 8, further comprising positioning wherein the actuator is in a location sufficient to for preventing the individual from impeding the opening of said the door.

15. (Currently Amended): An actuator comprising:
a proximity sensor capable of for detecting the a presence of an individual in at least one proximity zone and further comprising , wherein the at least one proximity zone is within a preset distance for an individual from the proximity sensor;
a display operable with the proximity sensor, the display providing at least one individual iconic instruction corresponding to said the at least one proximity zone,
wherein the at least one iconic instruction includes an affirmative action to be performed by the individual, and wherein the affirmative action activates a control unit for sending an electronic signal to a power assisted drive mechanism for engaging a door opening mechanism, thereby allowing the door opening mechanism to control a speed of movement for the door.

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Claim 16 (Canceled)

17. (Currently Amended): The actuator of claim 16-15, wherein the at least one proximity zone comprises first and second proximity zones, and wherein an individual's presence in a the first zone initiates an iconic signal to draw an individual's attention to and not touch ~~said actuator~~ the proximity sensor.

18. (Currently Amended): The actuator of claim 17, wherein an individual's presence in a the second zone initiates an iconic signal instructing an the individual to make an affirmative action in proximity to ~~said actuator~~ the proximity sensor.

19. (Currently Amended): The actuator of claim 15 18, wherein an individual's presence in any of -said the first and second proximity zones initiates an audible signal.

Claim 20 (Canceled)

21. (New): The automatic door opening apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the control unit is programmed for signaling a ceasing of operation of the door.

22. (New): The method of claim 8, comprising signaling a ceasing of operation of the door responsive to a signal from the control unit.

23. (New): An apparatus for automatically opening a swinging door, the apparatus comprising:

an actuator having at least one proximity sensor for detecting at least one proximity zone, wherein the at least one proximity sensor detects the proximity of an individual;

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a display operable with the actuator, the display providing an iconic instruction for an individual to perform an affirmative action so as to cause the at least one proximity sensor to activate the actuator, wherein the display provides iconic instructions to an individual based on the proximity of the individual to the at least one proximity sensor, and wherein the display provides an audible signal based on the proximity of the individual to the actuator;

a control unit in electronic communication with the actuator; and

a power assisted drive mechanism in electronic communication with the control unit, wherein the power assisted drive mechanism operates to open the door through activation of a conventional door closer.

24. (New): An actuator comprising:

a proximity sensor for detecting a presence of an individual in at least one proximity zone, wherein the at least one proximity zone is within a preset distance for an individual from the proximity sensor, and wherein the at least one proximity zone comprises at least first and second proximity zones, and wherein an individual's presence in the first zone initiates an iconic signal to draw an individual's attention to the proximity sensor; and

a display operable with the proximity sensor, the display providing at least one iconic instruction corresponding to the at least one proximity zone, wherein the at least one iconic instruction includes an affirmative action to be performed in proximity to the proximity sensor by the individual, and wherein the affirmative action activates a control unit for sending an electronic signal to a power assisted drive mechanism for engaging a door opening mechanism, thereby allowing the door opening mechanism to control a speed of movement for the door.